



# THE WAYFARER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ADAM LINDSAY GORDON COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE INC.

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## FROTH AND BUBBLE DAY 2008

In Torquay (Vic) on Saturday morning 21 June, three days before the 138<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the poet Gordon's death, a small band of volunteers set out with two dozen flags on eight foot bamboo poles to attach to places outside the venues that were to host the inaugural Torquay Froth and Bubble Festival. The festival was the brainchild and inspiration of our Secretary, John Adams.

The Festival was a resounding success attracting interest from the young and old alike. The school children in the district had already placed their literary works in shop windows and on walls in cafes throughout Torquay. Poets, writers, theatre performers and a playwright thoroughly enjoyed themselves for the two days of the Festival by not only presenting workshops and readings themselves but also taking part as the audience. Attendances at the seven venues over the two days averaged 24 persons and many was the cheerful remark of "next year".

The week before we honoured the Poet with a service at Gordon Square, Spring Street and later joined with World Poetry, the Fellowship of Australian Writers and Federation Square in an afternoon of literature. Our special guest was Professor Michael Wilding.



(above) Images from Froth & Bubble 2008. (top to bottom) At Gordon Square, Spring Street; St Joseph's College Geelong Theatre Troupe; Gabrielle Williams Conducting a Workshop At The Chocolate Room; Allan Childs (left) at Federation Square with Maxwell and Alix Atkins, granddaughter of Charles Long, Chairman of the Gordon Memorial Committee

THE ADAM LINDSAY GORDON POETRY COMPETITIONS

Congratulations to the winners of both the Open Section and the Students' Section in this year's poetry competition.

First Prize donated by Susan Pender—Open Section won by Glenn Palmer for "Kindred Spirits"

Away! Away! the venturer is forging through the throng;  
beware the passion looming, set no foot or hoof a-wrong,  
for man nor beast will conquer haunted genius in flight  
as onward, on to victory, emblazoned ere the night  
awaits, with hushed foreboding of discordant symphony  
from Mistress Melancholia beguiling sanity.

Escape! Escape the madness coursing through the master-mind,  
and flee to scale the arch-ed limbs of Wattle there inclined,  
and rest...oh rest the torment, with the pen and pipe alight,  
in wanton wonder weave your whimsied words with wan delight;  
there craft for me your rhapsody in posthumous decree,  
and shed for me compassion's tear for common agony.

Begone! Begone vile spectres, sail the blessed dawning light  
that ushers fond deliverance from demons of the night,  
and stroll with me in empathy through lyricism's land,  
and grant to me a moment's comprehension of the hand  
and heart and soul you offered us; forgive our faculty  
embezzling all discernment of your solemn legacy.

Redemption! Oh Redemption, sweet the kiss upon my brow,  
I kneel in supplication at the sigh before me now;  
the battered bluestone pillar guarding history's bequest,  
the infant's clay and thine entwined, eternally at rest.  
This earth-bound kindred spirit bids, beholden, your release,  
now ride your foaming thoroughbreds of Brighton, back to peace.

© Glenn Palmer 2008

Second Prize—Open Section won by Stefan Nicholson for "Rise Swiftly Up"

Aye, you were kind of heart,  
Travelled too well by bloody far,  
For I've read your youth and pain in part.  
How young 'uns early rest broke hard  
Bringing mind to fray, then wife to part.

Deprived of luck, yet blessed with verse,  
I've lived your bush and I dream its sound.  
Aye, Scot of Fayal, demand I nought—nor do I curse,  
That tragic day when yer fired that single round.

Rise swiftly up, on your ghostly charger mount.  
Speak up, and take your place, fine lad,  
Now you'll get full measure and voices to count  
From life beyond grave, without loss like you've had.

Your island homes erect fine statues tall,  
And your words shine without every child's reach.  
Make up on lost time young man—for that fateful fall,  
And your wee lassie's loss—and Brighton Beach.

© Stefan Nicholson 2008



First Prize—Student's Section won by Sondra Solomon for "Foreign Shores"

Foreign shores  
were the beginning of a legend  
Greater than books  
Greater than movies  
Real Life.

From a youth  
unable to be held, restrained;  
To a steady  
reliable

Officer.  
Times change  
we move on  
But some things are set  
constant  
absolute.

Wildness can't be  
cultivated, it's  
In the blood  
In the air  
In our soul.

Feats  
that require so much trust  
are simply another day  
to a partner like this.  
Then Life spins out of control  
(why are we trialled like this?)

And gets one wondering  
why me?  
what have I done?  
where can I go?  
Some go further than others  
(blood in the underbrush).  
But in life after death  
fame spreads further than flesh  
a name is easier remembered than a face  
There's something about him  
something  
That inspired words  
freer than before

And who  
who is this sturdy lad  
That no one could restrain?  
That lives on  
somehow?  
Why, a horse.  
And Adam Lindsay Gordon,  
of course.

© Sondra Solomon 2008



ELIZABETH LAUDER: A LOVING FRIEND OF POET GORDON



(above) Elizabeth Lauder nee Bright at the age of 41. Lauder was responsible for planting the two wattle trees over Gordon's grave. One died and the other prospered until at least the 1930s (Source: Dingley Dell Collection, Port MacDonnell)

On our website can be found a growing collection of over 80 newspaper articles. This extract is courtesy of *The Record* and features Elizabeth Lauder nee Bright. Bright's brother, Edward was the 'Ned' in Gordon's most famous poem—*The Sick Stockrider*. A loving friend of The Poet who for many years maintained his grave at the Brighton General Cemetery, Lauder went on to live until April 1914 and lies buried at Springvale Botanical Gardens (Vic).

*"An old colonist named Mrs. Annie Lauder, residing at 3 Davison-place, South Melbourne, is the possessor of this most interesting relic. We have seen it, and it is in a wonderful state of preservation. It was made by Gordon, Johnnie Bright and Edward Bright, brothers of Mrs. Lauder, upon whose father's*

*station in the Long Desert, South Australia, Gordon was employed, he being about 19 years of age. In these early days a friendship sprang up between the young people, which grew stronger during the following years. The stockwhip is splendidly made from the raw green hide of a wild bullock, and judges say it is a work of art. Miss Bright was always the custodian of the whip, as Gordon more frequently used a heavier one. It is not generally known why Gordon left Cotswold, England, to live in Australia, but the following is absolutely true, being told by himself to the Bright family. He was attending a military college and often took part in amateur race meetings. On one occasion he was first favorite, and his colleagues (or many of them), were backing his mount: but as the day drew nigh the horses' owner gave orders*

*that the animal was not to be taken out of the stable. Young Gordon was disappointed and rather sore for his friends' sake, and listening to unwise counsel, went to the stable, took the horse, rode and won the race, only to find the owner and a policeman watching for him as he dismounted after passing the winning post. It was with some difficulty his father kept him from the clutches of the law, but it ended in Gordon being sent out to South Australia. It is evident that he never got over the humiliation".*

(Source: *The Record* (South Melbourne) 25 Jun 1910 p3)

**MEMBERS**

Members can read the full article on the Members' Area on our website

[www.adamlindsaygordon.org](http://www.adamlindsaygordon.org)

OUR NEW WEBSITE

Our website has been redesigned into a more professional looking and easy to navigate site. Much of what we aim to achieve as a group revolves around our website. In collecting and sharing material on Adam Lindsay Gordon, the website is the best medium to achieve this. That's why we have created a Members' Area containing secure content only for our members. Over the coming year,

a great amount of material that we have amassed will progressively be added to the website. Already since the new website was launched, we have doubled the amount of newspaper articles available and all are in the original print format. And while on the topic of websites, be sure to check out [www.dingleydel.net](http://www.dingleydel.net), the new website for Gordon's former holiday home at Port MacDonnell (SA).



A DEDICATION

THEY are rhymes rudely strung with intent less  
Of sound than of words,  
In lands where bright blossoms are scentless,  
And songless bright birds ;  
Where, with fire and fierce drought on her tresses,  
Insatiable Summer oppresses  
Sere woodlands and sad wildernesses,  
And faint flocks and herds.

Where in dreariest days, when all dews end,  
And all winds are warm,  
Wild Winter's large flood-gates are loosen'd,  
And floods, freed by storm,  
From broken up fountain heads, dash on  
Dry deserts with long pent up passion—  
Here rhyme was first framed without fashion,  
Song shaped without form.

Whence gather'd?—The locust's glad chirrup  
May furnish a stave ;  
The ring of a rowel and stirrup,  
The wash of a wave.  
The chaunt of the marsh frog in rushes,  
That chimes through the pauses and hushes  
Of nightfall, the torrent that gushes,  
The tempests that rave.

In the deep'ning of dawn, when it dapples  
The dusk of the sky,  
With streaks like the redd'ning of apples,  
The ripening of rye,  
To eastward, when cluster by cluster,  
Dim stars and dull planets that muster,  
Wax wan in a world of white lustre  
That spreads far and high ;

In the gathering of night gloom o'erhead, in  
The still silent change,  
All fire-flush'd when forest trees redden  
On slopes of the range.  
When the gnarl'd, knotted trunks Eucalyptian  
Seem carved, like weird columns Egyptian,  
With curious device—quaint inscription,  
And hieroglyph strange.

[The full version of the poem "A Dedication" can be viewed on our website [www.adamlindsaygordon.org/works\\_adedication.htm](http://www.adamlindsaygordon.org/works_adedication.htm)]

TOUR OF BRIGHTON GENERAL CEMETERY

Our next tour of the Brighton General Cemetery (Vic) will be held on **Sunday 31 August 2008 at 10:30am**. 'Adam Lindsay Gordon: His Life and Beyond' is an insightful and informative tour featuring 11 subjects with links to Gordon's story. **Bookings are essential**. Cost is \$5.00 (non-members \$10.00) and includes refreshments and a tour guide. For more information ring 03 5261 2899 or visit our website [www.adamlindsaygordon.org/tours.htm](http://www.adamlindsaygordon.org/tours.htm).

*All proceeds goes towards  
The Adam Lindsay Gordon Grave Restoration Appeal.*

LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARDED TO JOHN ADAMS

At our recent Committee meeting, a motion was passed unanimously awarding Life Membership to our Secretary John Adams in recognition of his outstanding contribution, tireless effort and financial generosity since the formation of The Adam Lindsay Gordon Commemorative Committee Inc. Age shows no sign of slowing down this warrior. John has been the driving force behind all the work we do and our achievements to



(above) President Allan Childs (left) awarding Life Membership to John Adams

date are a credit to John's dedication. No committee could ask for a better servant. *Well done, John!*

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE NOW DUE

With the end of the financial year upon us, a timely reminder that your membership fees are now due. In spite of rising costs, the Committee has kept

membership fees at \$A15.00 for 2008-09. We urge all members to continue their membership—with just over \$400 of surplus funds in our operating account, every dollar counts.

THE ADAM LINDSAY GORDON GRAVE RESTORATION APPEAL

The Adam Lindsay Gordon Grave Restoration Appeal has received a significant boost with the successful application under The Commemoration of Historic Events and Famous Persons Grant in Aid Program (CHEFP). We now aim to engage Lodge Bros. to re-affix the four marble panels that are in urgent need of repair. The total amount raised so far has reached \$4,673.58. You can assist the Committee to reach our target of \$10,000 by coming along to our next tour of Brighton General Cemetery.



We acknowledge the following for their generous donations to The Adam Lindsay Gordon Grave Restoration Appeal:

*Anthony Roseman, Philton (\$100), Margaret Hart (\$40).*